Let Us Recover Our True Humanity

(Genesis 1:27, June 18, 2023)

Today, around the world, countless people are becoming Christians. Within the Assemblies of God alone, Sunday worship attendance exceeds seventy million, and when we count the various ministries influenced by this movement, the number of believers reaches into the hundreds of millions.

Of course, statistics can be inflated—like the attendance figures reported by demonstration organizers. Even so, the Assemblies of God has sparked one of the most remarkable religious movements in human history.

Yet this growth is mostly outside the traditional Christian countries of the West. In those nations, church membership continues to decline.

I. Why Has Christianity Declined in the West?

The reasons are relatively simple. People no longer find traditional, authoritarian churches attractive. Even churches that are not authoritarian are swept along in the same tide. The deeper cause is that people have awakened to human rights and freedom, and have applied shallow forms of scientific reasoning to the Bible. Concluding that the Bible is "unscientific," they can no longer accept its authority.

For example, some take modern science and measure it against the creation story in Genesis. When they find it does not match, they dismiss Genesis as false. Traditional churches, instead of explaining carefully, often opposed science outright. The result was a loss of credibility.

II. The Limits of Modern Western Society

Having rejected the authority of the Bible and the Church, Western people began to elevate human ability, freedom, and rights in their place. This produced societies far more humane than those previously controlled by oppressive churches. Many concluded that a world without the Church, without God as a presupposition, was better.

Yet such a society has its limits. The truth is that humans were created in the image of God. We are endowed with divine qualities—reason, conscience, freedom, responsibility. The Western world thought it was breaking away from Christianity, but in fact, it was only returning to the original principles of Scripture, which the authoritarian churches had long distorted.

Still, in their reaction, many discarded not only the "dirty water" of oppressive churches, but also "the baby in the basin"—the Bible itself. In doing so, they lost their anchor.

Now, in the West, people enjoy freedom but live in confusion. They cry for peace yet cannot find it. They proclaim equality yet perpetuate division. They denounce war yet engage in endless conflict. Having lost the reverence of worshiping the Creator, they are left adrift in unrestrained desire.

III. The Reality of Sin and Evil

The Bible teaches that we live under the bondage of sin and under the sway of the devil. Modern Western nations, having cast off the Bible, no longer recognize this. Thus, the pursuit of freedom and rights, though noble in name, has led to growing inequality, vast poverty, and ceaseless wars.

In truth, what is celebrated as liberty has often become selfishness. What is proclaimed as democracy has been used to justify violence. Without acknowledging the absolute God, humanity no longer knows how to live rightly.

IV. What Western Nations Need

It was right to abandon the authoritarian, inhumane churches of the past. But it was a grave mistake to abandon the Bible along with them. What Western nations now need is to recover what was thrown away—the Word of God.

The churches of the past failed to honor the "baby in the basin." They twisted Scripture for their own ends, using it selfishly and carelessly. In response, the people threw away both the corrupt church and the precious Bible together.

Today, in a West lost and restless, the great need is to recover the Bible, and with it, our true humanity as created in God's image.

For Scripture says: *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4:4). To lose the Bible is to lose the very foundation of life.

So let us once again read God's Word, follow its guidance, and live as those who reflect the image of God. In doing so, we will recover our true humanity.